1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

592
596 seven) were extended in the sense of consisting of an undivided family of three generations with pooled income. There were also five households in which a mother had moved in with one of her divided married sons. The mere fact that the average life span of the Santal is relatively short and the fact that families generally fracture after the father's death are sufficient to account for the preponderance of the nuclear family.

592 Each economically undivided family has a part of the house set apart for the purpose of worship and sometimes also for the storing of rice and other valuables. A wall extending nearly [192] across the house divides the largest room of the house in two; it is the smaller portion which is set apart, and it is known as the "inner room" (*bhitar*; inside, as in Hindi). On almost all 592 festivals, offerings of rice beer are made here to the patrilineal 769 ancestors, accompanied by prayers asking that the family be [192] spared sickness (*handi bonga* = rice beer worship). At this offering the head of the household usually presides, accompanied by one or more male relatives. Offerings may be brought by females of the household if they are not menstruating at the time, but females not of the household may never enter on the grounds that "one never knows their condition." "Rice beer worship," with its offerings to the ancestors, is obviously expressive of the bonds within the extended family, but *Maran Buru*, the tribal deity, also receives his offering during ancestor worship, expressing the unity of the tribe.

• 556 Aside from the interconnected strands of kinship and territory, there is another socially relevant characteristic—wealth. As a social marker, like the inheritance of tribal offices, it provides social positions not attainable by all in the normal life [581] process. Much will be said of its divisive effects later; it is appropriate to note here that it operates in establishing mar-

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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556 [581] [622] [624] riage connections by joining together families of approximately equal wealth and that it is an important source of power. There is a strong tendency for village officers and other members of founding lineages to be richer than later immigrants; hence wealth tends to be joined with hereditary office. In the informal councils which precede formal deliberations over disputes or policy, men listen more attentively to the statements of the wealthy. This attentiveness is a sign of respect, but also of recognition of the wealthy individual's ability to give or withhold favors; sometimes there is also the informal bribery of generous hospitality, and on occasion, outright bribes in return for support. Wealth differences can result in special likenesses and differences within Santal society, and even ceremonies graded in cost, as will be discussed later.

554 182 It would normally go without saying that those who hold positions of special power and prestige have a special interest in the preservation of traditional solidarity and provide a natural source of endogenous pressure for the maintenance of traditional structure. It receives mention here only because it will soon be shown that other circumstances make these same privileged Santal especially subject to tribally disintegrative centrifugal pressures.

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1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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177 workers, was founded as an ordinary agricultural village not
361 more than about sixty years ago. But such opportunities de-
648 creased throughout the nineteenth and this century. One inev-
311 [556] itable result was to increase wealth differences and to make them more permanent.

182 A major consequence of increased wealth differences has
157 been the strain placed on internal solidarity by "envy" (*bisǫ*;
556 Hindi: *hinska*) and even more by fear of "envy." What this
754 term conveys is concealed malicious intent based upon desire for what another possesses. Though Santal society has long been plagued with accusations of witchcraft, the notion that its practice is almost invariably deliberate and that it arises [562] from envy is of modern origin. Though it is recognized that men may be "envious," it is thought that females most often are guilty and that it is only they who practice witchcraft. Fer-
[426] tile grounds for envy, and attendant witchcraft, appeared when
[472] wealthy Santal began using their capital to hire other Santal, to loan money, paddy, and seed at interest, to buy forest land, and even in a few cases to invest in various small-scale enterprises. Relations arising from these investments are often strained and a source of resentment. Envy also arises from observation of what wealth procures in terms of traditional Santal pleasures and from its use in settling disputes.

437 Aside from the exacerbation of "envy," which increased wealth differences produced, the market imposed other, more general strains. It is difficult to square the basic reciprocity of relations in a kin society like that of the Santal with the impersonal and contractual relations of the market. Though the Santal struggle over land with as much ferocity as any peasants, they find it hard to insist on strictly market relations with other commodities, especially if pressed by kinsmen. A few Santal

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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437 entrepreneurs have gained notoriety by their greed, but more
[426] have failed in business from having granted credit and finding it difficult to collect the debt. Traditional Santal are poor at haggling even with non-Santal, though they understand the basic principle of the market and may even be conversant with a variety of devices used to swindle the unsuspecting bargainer. They will rise early to buy at a market before it becomes crowded or to intercept dealers on their way who will sell for less while en route. They are often aware of price differences and will walk several miles to buy at the cheaper and sell at the more expensive market. But the traditional Santal, once at the market, is too eager a buyer, too poor a haggler, and too readily drawn into pleasant social intercourse to hold his own.

• 556 Despite envy, traditional Santal society developed something of a *modus vivendi* between rich and poor. At all festivals, at marriages in particular, and in everyday affairs the wealthy are required to validate their status by giving more than others. The wealthy are thus the greatest providers of "pleasure" for the community, and though there is envy as well as respect, considerable healing is accomplished and unity restored at major ceremonies to which the wealthy have contributed much. Also, in the traditional setting, even with wealth differences and the context of the market, the cultural gap between rich and poor
[212] tended to be minimal. Fifty years ago the "elite" Santal, i.e., those with wealth and power, were almost totally illiterate; their style of life, judging by what one presently observes among illiterate and unschooled members of the elite, was only trivially different from that of their less well-situated neighbors. In terms of "likeness" the solidarity of the community was not greatly disturbed by wealth differences.

ooo Nonetheless, elite Santal were somewhat more Hinduized

1: Orans · E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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Nonetheless, elite Santal were somewhat more Hinduized

177 556 than their poorer fellows. Some managed to attract a coterie of high-caste but often impoverished Hindus. One hears of wealthy Santal who spent considerable sums on such associates during trips to and attendance at Hindu festivals. Some who were village headmen or Parganaths (multi-village headmen) established enduring relations with the Mahārājā or local zemindar of their region. These Santal often were given responsibility for tax collection, in return for which they kept a portion and received grants of land.

177 608 648 The Santal have long followed the practice of establishing among themselves, and with other castes, permanent bonds of a kinship type, which are given public recognition in a "flower" (*phul*; Santali and Hindi =flower) ceremony. In some instances an elite family managed to establish such a tie with a Brahman family while ordinary Santal contracted such relations only with other tribals or Hindus of very low caste. *This contact contributed to differential emulation of Hindu practices.* Some of the traditional elite among the southern Santal abandoned beef-eating and cow sacrifice; some affected the dress of high-caste Hindus; a few demanded an end to "capture marriage" (*itut' bapla*) because they did not wish to have close relations with unwealthy families of low status. Though their success in getting the non-elite to follow their Hinduized practices was limited, a certain degree of culture difference was established, to the detriment of solidarity.

[192] [583]

177 However, as the historical evidence indicates and as any contemporary observer could infer, contact with Hindu society has been long and/or intensive, and that portion of Santal culture shared by all Santal is so marked with Hindu traits that it would be a monumental task to indicate all of them. All Santal call on neighboring Hindus of low caste to deliver babies.

[759]

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 754 871 184 on those city Santal having a secular view of witchcraft indicates that almost all were exceptionally well-educated. The differences between village, *bustee*, and city Santal in witchcraft belief are statistical, reflecting the differences in education between the members of these three kinds of communities.

184 556 871 Increased education is significant for the solidarity of the Santal since it is not equally distributed among them. Generally, it widens the gap between the Santal who are already wealthier and occupy prestigeful hereditary positions and the mass of Santal without wealth or position. This differential distribution of education results from its cost; there are the direct expenses for tuition and books and living expenses away from home, plus the sacrifice of labor which farm families in particular must make in sending their children to school. The cultural gap [754] furthers the social gap. As indicated, the educated and traditional elite are "envied" and fearful of "envy"; in spite of the secular explanations given of witchcraft, many Santal working and living in Jamshedpur are reluctant to return to their villages for fear of witchcraft and the "envy" which is held to motivate it. The same fear prompts the powerful and wealthy who have children attending school to keep those children out of their native village, lest their presence arouse "envy."

177 184 871 Besides straining internal relations by accentuating divisive tendencies already present, by increasing Hinduization education reduces the differences between Santal and Hindu and thereby threatens the external aspect of solidarity. The very orientation and practices which served so well to separate the Santal from the Hindu are simultaneously the attributes of low status in the prevailing system of caste ranking. To maintain these practices which serve solidarity so well is to forego the

2: Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW43

782 793 The Kuḍam Naeke (the priest of the outskirts) offers his own blood every time the Naeke performs sacrifices, in the name of the Pargana bonga and the bongas along the boundaries. At Janthar (the first fruit offering of the heavy rice) he every year sacrifices a pig to the Pargana bonga, and at that time he also offers his own blood to him and to the bongas along the boundaries. At the hunt he offers to the same, in order that the village people may be fortunate and return well. At this time he makes an invocation: Greetings then, O Pargana, blood offering, pricked out blood is given, is offered to thee for the sake of the hunt, whose on the right side or the left side a servant girl or a dog puppy, a loṭo thorn (a thorny bush), a karke thorn (a pricking bush)[1] may be, in holes and recesses, mayest thou press it down, cover it up. A worn-out winnowing-fan, a ball of cotton thou wilt arrange for us, make security for us, Father my Thakur, Lord.

e. The division of agricultural land.

621 423 When they have appointed the rulers of a new village, then they sit one day and divide the land and homestead fields. They make units. One unit of agricultural land is what is needed for one plough. Having settled this they fix the rent, and at the same time set aside the land allotted to the offices of Maṅjhi, Paranik, Jog Maṅjhi, Jog Paranik, Godet, Naeke, and Kuḍam Naeke. The Maṅjhi gets four portions, the Paranik gets three portions, the Jog Maṅjhi gets two portions, and the others one portion each as office-land. This they have the use of without paying rent. The Maṅjhi had formerly half a rak (unit) following his office. Nowadays some village headmen have very large incomes.

245 In a new village people plant Horse-radish trees and Pipol trees near their respective houses. They eat the Horse-radish tree vegetables and the Pipol tree they have to get shade, and the Pipol tree, it is said, will be of use also in the next world.

621 When other people see that they get very good crops in a new village, they also will come and settle down there. The old residents will give them a share, a little of their prepared ricefields and of their highland fields, and the headman will show them fallow land to prepare ricefields. Then the village becomes populous. They work, do their business, they eat and drink, they have dances and games, they enjoy themselves, they live there.

f. Wealthy and poor people.

556 In the same village it does not go equally well for all there. Some people have both plough-cattle and servants; they are both industrious and also have sense, and they are also very niggardly; such people become wealthy. But some people have, to start with, no plough-cattle; they are also alone; they also suffer a good deal from fever; they have no sense, they are foolish, they are also lazy, they have no children either, and their women-folk waste away all, or they themselves squander all by beer-drinking, or

[1] The loṭo, Zizyphus domestorum, Lam., and the karke, Erioderis reinw, Syonym.

2: Skefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

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they cause themselves to be fined on account of transgressions and thereby become paupers; how should such people become wealthy?

426

Some people become worn out by constantly having to pay off the debts of their father; they are unable to raise themselves, they live pressed down under debts; the money-lenders charge an extremely high interest, and they keep accounts unrighteously. If you fall into the hands of a usurer, you will even in three, four generations certainly not be able to pay and free yourself. Your calves and goats, your cows and buffaloes, your kodalis and axes, your paddy and rice they will unjustly take away, and if you forbid them, they will thrash you and strip you.

But if people live along in the Santal country as paupers, while they have the full use of hands and feet, then this is surely mostly due to their own fault. People who have no plough-cattle will easily be able to get hired bullocks at four rupees yearly. And people who have many children are able to exchange service for bullocks. Or they are able to plough by exchange of labour and bullocks. Exchange of labour and bullocks is as follows: A man ploughs two days for the owner and gets breakfast with him, and then he ploughs one day for himself. The exchange of service for bullocks is as follows: A man's son works as servant with the owner of the plough-cattle, and his wages are the hire of a pair of plough-cattle. With the exception of a few landlords they do not take unjust rent. For every unit (rɛk) of land a rent of six or seven rupees has to be paid, and with one unit (rɛk) they earn so much in crops that the landowner gets one seventh part and the farmer six sevenths. And people who have freshly reclaimed land get more. The meaning of freshly reclaimed land is as follows: When they found a village, they will, when four or five years have passed, divide the land into units. So many residents as there are at that time, into so many units they will divide the land, and the landlord will get rent for each (rɛk) unit. At first they have to pay five four-anna bits for each unit. When they have had the use of it for about five years, the landowner will charge more per unit. But it will continue to be the same unit (rɛk), however much fresh ground they break up. When new settlers come, the old settlers will give them about one fourth part of their respective units, and they will divide the rent. Thereupon the old resident and the new resident will, both of them, clear fresh land and make boundaries; this they call khɔ̃rti (freshly reclaiming additional land). However much they may go on reclaiming fresh land, their rent will not be increased thereby; they will only have to pay the rent of the original unit (rɛk). But because they are lazy, some people do not reclaim fresh land; when the landowner raises the rent of people, such ones will feel it heavy, naturally not so those who have reclaimed fresh land.

461

Lazy people do not work carefully; they plough negligently, as it may go. When such people have just a little, their only interest is to eat and drink and lie down to sleep; they become paupers, what else can happen to them?

2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

464 One kind of poor people do not become absolute paupers, because when they have no necessary work of their own, they work for wages with wealthy people; thereby they get their subsistence, and people also feel compassion with them. They put their children to work as cattle-herds, or they make them fetch water and leaves, and people give them more than what they have a right to get, and when their children go to glean at harvest time, they leave much for them. People who have no bodily strength they also help in the same way, if they have no relatives who are able to help them. And when orphans 736 have no natural helpers, the village headman and his deputy will take such friendless ones to themselves, and they live in great ease, because no one will be able to snub them calling them orphans. Afterwards when they have grown up, they marry them off. Formerly there were no begging people, and also nowadays only a very few have learnt to beg from the Dekos and walk round in the villages and beg; this they do not call good, and there is no need; because if they have a wish to work, they may easily support themselves in the villages. Halt and lame, blind and not fully developed persons might get grual, by only watching the houses and doors of people.

556 Some good people could easily become wealthy; they have plough-cattle, they also have working people; but from fear of people they do not become very wealthy. They earn only just as much as to get food. Some women, it is said, are very envious of wealthy people; they say: These have very fine things to eat and drink; we have nothing. Then they cast an evil spell on them; then these wealthy people become ill, they become utter paupers, and they die. And such women also bury bongas in the house of wealthy people, so that these die thereby.

g. Mutual help in the village.

476 Formerly people who were not poor also helped each other very much, when there was any need; and nowadays also good people help each other. They ask each other for fire, [178] they give each other lime and tobacco to chew; kodalis and forks, axes and adzes, chisels [426] and mallets, ploughs and clod-crushers, pestles and wooden mortars, winnowing-fans and baskets, and so on, they lend to each other. And if a man has no cart, or he has too few, the village people will without taking any pay let him have cart and bullocks for one day. But if any of the bullock-owner's people go along to drive the cart, the man who has asked for the loan will have to give rice and curry. And also when building a house, when ploughing, planting, making ricefield ridges, and harvesting they help each other, and those who ask for help have only to give rice and curry, and occasionally they also give them beer to make them glad. And in fever and illness they visit each other, they help each other to pass the night, and when there is any necessity, they also help each other fetching water and leaves, plastering the court-yard with cow-dung and pounding, and men who know to give medicine do this without any charge. They get food, and when

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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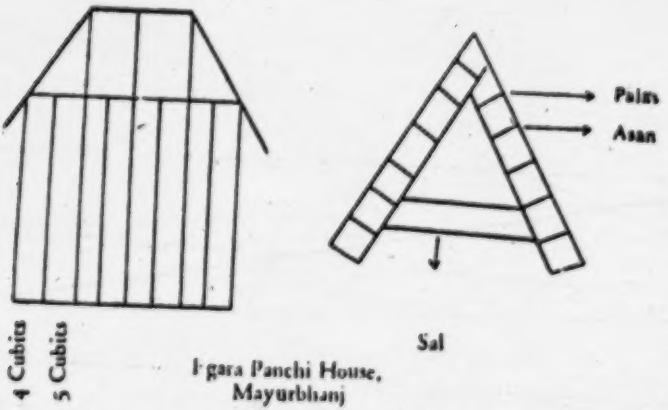
In the enclosed diagram, we have shown a usual 'egara panchi' (*eleven by five cubits*) house. This is the orthodox model, much in favour, and consists of nine poles of "Sal" (*Shorea Robusta*) fixed on the ground. Three of them are fixed at the either side of the cottage and three go to support the roof, standing just in the middle. The poles on either side, "anatang khunti" (*side-posts*) measure four cubits each ; whereas, those in the middle, are called "mutul khunti" (*middle-posts*). The roofs of such cottages slope on both sides.



Egara Panchi House,
Mayurbhanj

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179

There are of course wealthy Santals, who have imitated their Hindu neighbours so fully in their manners and customs, that in their house-building, there is nothing of their own. We saw some such huge structures at Tentulbati, now rendered into piles of mud, as the inmates had fled owing,

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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342 556 179 it was told, to the depredations of evil-spirits. And even brick-built houses like those of the rich land-owners of Orissa caught our attention at Tikari-para, Mayurbhanj, with surrounding walls of brick that one cannot usually associate with Santal life,[1] except in their absence of windows.

342 776 [231] [574] Windows Santals will never have. "O, the Boṅgas," will again be the answer if you question them on the point. The Santal dog, who snarls at the chance passer-by, and is treated and fed like a member of the family, keeps an all-night vigil. If you call for a Santal at mid-night, it may be he may greet you with an arrow, for he thinks that "Boṅgas" take human shapes and lure away men and women.

353 Santal walls are the beauty-spots of the hamlet. Here the inner artistic craving of the primitive tribe has displayed itself in a realm of phantasy. In some places, we saw the walls painted with a variety of colours, white, yellow, black, red and chocolate; sometimes with one colour and sometimes with alternate stripes, again with queer patches of triangles and rectangles. (See illustrations). Various pictures, associated with Santal life, sometimes greet your eyes. Here is a Brobdingnagian deity aiming a shaft at a

1 This was the house of Chandramohan Murmu of Tikaripara, Bamanghati, Mayurbhanj. Its dimensions were measured to be 50 by 20 cubits.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

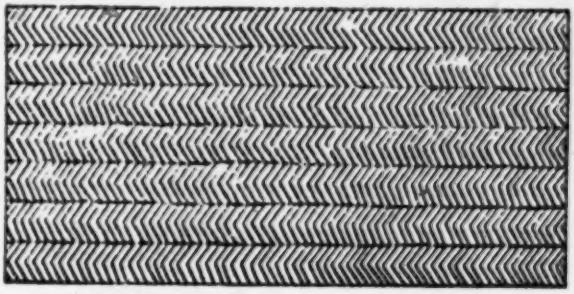
bunch of "sal" flowers, there a village-group sitting at a feast of rice and rice-beer. We were also invited to examine some more wall-paintings, walls which were proud to bear representations of steam-engines and aero-planes, and marking our reluctance to be so near modernism, our Santal friends expressed profound surprise.

The yard is scrupulously clean, and, to translate a Bengali saying, "You might pick vermilion if some dropped upon it." There is sometimes the finish of a cement but generally everything is plastered over with mud and cow-dung. Jutting out into the lane are the pig-styes and poultry-yard. The room at the entrance is the "Gohal" (*cattle-shed*). Almost invariably a stench will repel one's olfactory nerves, but then one must not forget that the Santals like the Hindus almost worship the cows; and the first item in their annual Harvest Home is the "Gohal puja," when the cows are anointed with vermilion and adored as their best earthly possession. There, one will find the oil-press and the rice-husking "dheñki." In the houses of the more affluent, a separate outer house can be found which gives the combined service of a kitchen and poultry-yard. Drinking-water drawn from the neighbouring springs is stored in earthen pitchers, about two cubits and a half in height, and kept in a conspicuous place.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

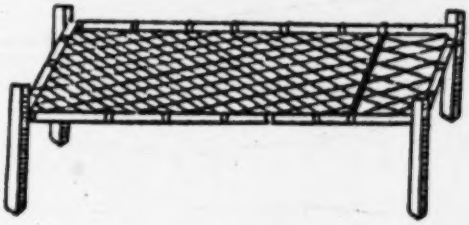
Furniture and other House-hold Articles

352 In the modest living we associate with the Santals, one cannot expect them to use furniture as we understand by the term. A palm-leaf mat, called [285] "pàṭia" (*Santali*), spread on the bare floor serves as



Mat (patia)

the bed of the average man and woman. (See illus- [556] tration). Those financially better off, sleep on a string-bed within a wooden frame-work called



Parkòm

"parkòm" by the Santals and "khatia" by the "Dekos" (*non-Santals*). (See illustration).

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Some wives of well-to-do 301
Santals wear a head-ornament called "jhip- [556]
jhipi," a silver tiara-like ornament, with a crescent moon glimmering in a locket (See illustration). Next, a decoration for the waist, "danda jhinjhir" (*Santali*) claims our attention. (See illustration). It is a mechanism of three silver strings fastened with a clasp, worn like a girdle round the waist with an ornamented centre shining on the back over the "sari". They decorate their ear-lobes with what they call

Jhipjhipi

Danda jhinjhir

"jhinka," an ear-drop, about an inch and a half in circumference. And the upper ears sparkle with "khutla," with five chains of silver swinging from it, whereas, the necks have beauty aids in the shape of "hansulis." (See illustration).

Khutla

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

241 on a steep hill-side; when the wood of the felled
171 trees is dry, generally toward the end of the hot season, it is burned. In this way the ground is cleared, and when the rains set in, the seed is sown without any ploughing. The present-day Paharias make small holes with a crow-bar and drop the seed into the holes, especially of bajra, Sorghum vulgare Pers., of maize and of a few other kinds. This is all, except that they may
241 pluck away weeds. It is said that when the Santals in former times followed a similar mode of cultivation they simply sowed the seed (especially bajra) at the top of the cleared hill-side, the spreading being left to the water of the rains flowing down; in some cases, a branch of a thorn-tree (Zizyphus Jujuba Lam.) is said to have been pressed into a flat shape and dragged over the ground to spread the seed".

243
[46] From early morning till evening they work in the field. Rice is their staple food; in it wealth is reck-
[556] oned and from it they obtain their drink. Both sexes
[262] work in the field. Every man tries to secure agricultural
[462] fields near his house and also near a streamlet flowing. They cultivate their soil and also gather natural produce when their crops do not grow due to want of rain or for some other reasons. The Santals prepare two kinds of rice field. One type is adjoining their houses, the other is at some distance away from their houses, which is on high land.

Preparation of ricefield :— After selecting the site, the Santals clear the field of jungle and vegetation. Then they surround it with ridges but if the land is
[412] slopy then they make the ridge only on the lower
[407] side. With the hoe and a heavy leveller (karha) they